In the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.   (Currently Amended): A method for conducting a contest using a network, the method comprising the steps of:

displaying,[[,]] to a user a plurality of pick spaces and a rolling counter, the rolling counter constituting of a plurality of available characters, each character being displayed for a preselected duration;

assigning, each time the user performs a predefined selection action, the then-displayed character of the rolling counter to a one of the plurality of pick spaces and thereafter displaying the assigned character in the corresponding pick space;

assembling, when each pick space displays an assigned character, an entry data packet including data indicative of the assigned character in each of the plurality of pick spaces;

transmitting the entry data packet from the user computer across the network to a remote site;

receiving the entry data packet at the remote site; and

determining if the assigned characters in each of the plurality of pick spaces represented by the received entry data packet match a preselected winning combination of characters, and if so, concluding the received entry data packet to be a winning entry, otherwise, concluding the received entry data packet is not a winning entry.

2.   (Previously Presented): A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein each character displayed in the rolling counter is randomly selected from among the plurality of available characters.

3.   (Previously Presented): A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein each character displayed in the rolling counter is displayed in accordance with a predetermined order of display.

4.   (Original):   A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the preselected duration for display of each character in the rolling counter is sufficiently long to allow the user to accurately determine which character will be assigned to each pick space.

5.   (Original):   A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the preselected duration for display of each character in the rolling counter is insufficiently long to allow the user to accurately determine which character will be assigned to each pick space.

6.   (Original):   A method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising retrieving information indicative of the user's identity from a database at a remote site.

7.   (Original):   A method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying an advertising message on the screen of the user computer during the course of the contest.

8.   (Original):   A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the predetermined selection action comprises:
     moving a screen cursor controlled by a computer pointing device onto the image of the character of the rolling counter; and
     activating a button on the computer pointing device.

9.   (Original): A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the step of transmitting the entry data packet occurs after the user completes a predetermined submission sequence.

10.   (Original):   A method in accordance with claim 9, wherein the predetermined submission sequence includes inputting information indicative of the user's identity.

11.   (Original):   A method in accordance with claim 10, wherein the predetermined submission sequence further includes:
     moving a screen cursor controlled by a computer pointing device onto the screen image of a submit button; and

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activating a button on the computer pointing device.

12. (Previously Presented): A method in accordance with claim 9, wherein the predetermined submission includes:

moving a screen cursor controlled by a computer pointing device onto the screen image of a submit button; and

activating a button on the computer pointing device.

13. (Original): A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the step of assembling the entry data packet further comprises encrypting the data.

14. (Original): A method in accordance with claim 13, wherein the step of receiving the entry data packet further comprises decrypting the received packet to extract the data.

15. (Original): A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the entry data packet further comprises data representative of the user's identity.

16. (Original): A method in accordance with claim 15, wherein the data representative of the user's identity includes a network address of the user.

17. (Original): A method in accordance with claim 16, wherein the network address is an e-mail address.

18. (Original): A method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising the step of transferring contest software to the user's computer prior to the step of displaying.

19. (Original): A method in accordance with claim 18, wherein the step of transferring includes inducing the user to access a remote site on the network.

20. (Original): A method in accordance with claim 19, wherein the remote site is an Internet web page.

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